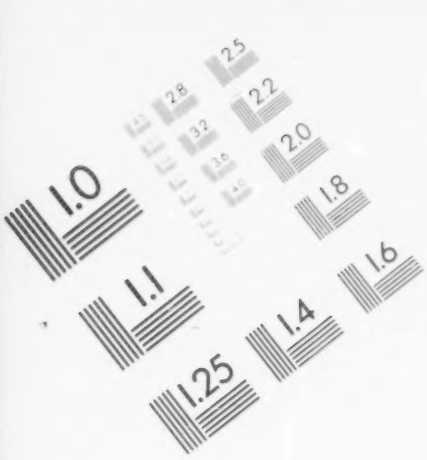

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Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
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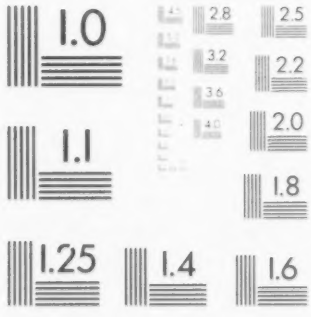

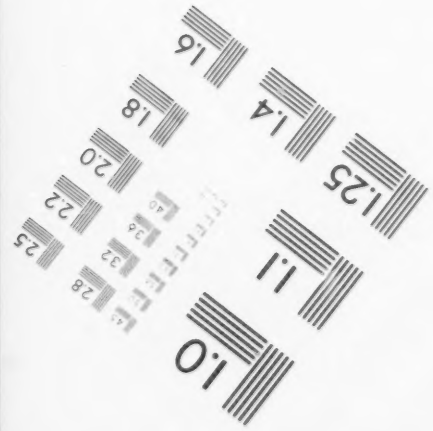

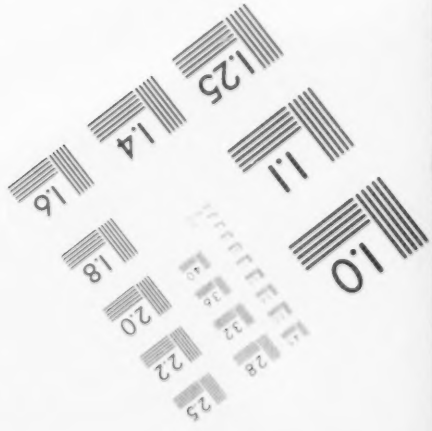

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is three-fold: (1) to identify and describe the eminent, as well as, international LIS (Library and Information Science) journals; (2) to compare and contrast the leading and international LIS journals; and (3) to test the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between leading and international journals based on several variables. Independent ratio-level variables include volume number as a proxy for age of publication, region, acceptance rate, peer-review, total number of editorial board members, total number of editors, total number of women editors, total number of international board members, and total number of major articles per year. Outcome (i.e., dependent) variables include prestige and circulation. It is concluded that there are significant differences between leading and international LIS journals. The former group is older and has lower acceptance rates; the latter are smaller and have higher acceptance rates. There are a number of significant relationships between editors and gender, editorial size, and number of international editorial board members. International submissions are most influenced by international board members on international journals. U.S. journals are not as international as journals published elsewhere in the world. (MES)

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LIS journal response to globalization: an analytical study of leading and international journals

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Paper

Introduction

Library and information science (LIS) researchers are increasingly global in their attention. Yet, many LIS journals that report research appear to be national in character. Thus, an analytical study of LIS journals could help the field better understand knowledge networking and exchange. Such a study should interest journal editors, editorial board members, journal publishers and managers, collection development management and development librarians, other bibliometric researchers and, of course, indirectly benefit the journal subscribers and readers. Indeed, such a study seems especially timely given the end of the millennium when we should stop and take stock of the state of LIS journal publishing.

Objectives

The purpose of this study is three-fold: 1) to identify and describe the eminent as well as international LIS journals; 2) to compare and contrast the leading as well as international LIS journals; and 3) to test the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between leading and international journals based on the several variables (identified below).

Research Questions

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This study aims to answer such broad questions as "What is the relationship between a leading or international journal's circulation, number of board members, number of editors, nationality of board and editors and the number of international articles, perceptual rankings, or impact factors?" In addition, this study will examine how international are the "international" journals compared to the leading LIS journals?" and "Does an international editorial board increase the number of international articles, perceptual rankings, citations, impact, or circulation?" And lastly, "Are LIS journals published outside of the United States more international than those published in the United States?" (in other words, is there a North American paradigm?)

Working Hypothesis

The overarching hypothesis that directs this study is that the leading and international journals are different based on the variables identified and described below.

Operational Definitions

The operational definitions for concepts as well as several variables were identified in the LIS literature by searching ERIC and Library Literature for the following terms in Boolean combinations: scholarly journals with bibliometrics or trend analysis and foreign countries. In addition, Cheryl A. McCarthy's article contains a useful "selected bibliography" (McCarthy 2000) and Christine Borgman's chapter provides a useful introduction to understanding scholarly communities (Borgman 2000). This combined approach yielded about a dozen citations and will be discussed below. The following decision rules were applied. "All LIS journals" (where a journal is a periodical published more frequently than annually) is determined by a listing in Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory for 1998 under the heading "Library and Information Sciences." International LIS journals are operationally defined as those journals in LIS with international in their title or subtitle based on Ulrich's listing (see table 1 for a list of these journals). Place of publication is taken from Ulrich's and then confirmed on the journal's front matter as the publishing office's location. International authorship means one or more authors are from a country foreign to the journal's place of publication. For instance, an Irish author is foreign if the journal is published Great Britain (which includes England, Scotland, and Wales), or the United Kingdom (which includes Great Britain and Northern Ireland); similarly, a Canadian author is foreign if the place of publication in the United States. In 1990, Herman has examined the citation practices of United Kingdom and United States LIS authors in twenty-nine English-language LIS journals to see if they were receptive to citing international authors; she found United Kingdom authors more receptive than United States authors (Herman 1991). Thus, the present study looks at the nationality of authors in the leading as well as the overtly international LIS journals. In addition, Wormell examined seven LIS journals, but analyzes Libri and JASIS in depth, in an effort to understand "how the 'international' are the international journals" (Wormell 1998). In particular, she notes a slight to low correlation "between geographical distribution patterns of authors, citations and subscriptions." Leading LIS journals are operationally defined as the top ten journals (that is, 20% of the fifty-four ranked journals) listed in the Institute for Scientific Information's Social Sciences Edition of their Journal Citation Reports for 1989 and 1988 for "Information Science and Library Science." See table 2 for the names of these journals.

Independent ratio-level variables

1. Volume number as a proxy for age of publication in years (taken from the journal itself);

2. Region (by grouping the journals into four clusters based on publishing information: North America, United Kingdom, Europe, and elsewhere);
3. Acceptance rate, the percentage of articles accepted compared to the total number of articles submitted (sources: email to editors and, if no response, Lynn W. Livingston, In Print: Publishing Opportunities for College Librarians, Chicago: ALA, 1997 or Carol F. Schroeder and Gloria G. Roberson, ed., Guide to Publishing Opportunities for Librarians, New York: Haworth Press, 1995);
4. Peer-review, where 0 is non-existent; 1 is single-blind; and 2 is double-blind reviews (technically this variable is nominal, but a dummy variable can be created to make it ratio-level);
5. Total number of editorial, consulting or advisory, board members based on the January 1998 issues (named on the masthead or preliminary pages of the journal but not counting editors, associate editors, managing editors, assistant editors, and editorial assistants or ex officio or association officers);
6. Total number of editors (including chairman of the editorial board, editors-in-chief, executive editors, column editors, field editors, national or regional editors, senior associate or associate editors, managing editors, assistant editors, book review editors, and editorial assistants or interns but not counting founding editors or editors emeriti, editorial interns, ex officio or association officers);
7. Total number of women editors (based on first-hand examination of the journal masthead);
8. Total number of international board members based on the January 1998 and 1988 issues; and
9. Total number of major (main, full-length) articles per year (based on typography):
    a. No annotated, classified (or otherwise) bibliographies, notable documents or reviews of reference sources
    b. No editorials or guest editorials, symposia, research in brief, critical reviews, in memoriam (even with citations or references), introductions to special issues, brief or shorter communications, columns, conference reports, critical review articles, notes, opinion pieces, comments or letters or responses, etc.
    c. Book reviews are not counted
    d. Count "Interviews" when accompanied with notes or references

Outcome (i.e., dependent) variables

In addition to comparing the two classes of journals for the number of international articles (that is, the total number of international articles per year), it also possible to examine within and among group differences for: A) As proxies for eminence, prestige, using: 1) The Davis and Kohl perceptual rankings of LIS journals from their 1982 survey. They found that LIS deans and directors valued journals differently than did ARL library directors (Kohl and Davis 1985); hence, the present study uses both rankings (see their table 1 on page 42). Unfortunately, there is no current perceptual study of LIS journals; 2) The Institute for Scientific Information's (ISI's) Journal Citation Report (JCR) Impact Factor scores for 1998 and 1988, which lists the top fifty-four journals in 1998. Looking at the period from 1977 to 1987, Rice has examined the "core" LIS journals and has found three distinct subdisciplines-see his figure 8.3 and 8.4 (Rice 1990); the present study will comment on this finding below. As a cautionary note, Nisonger finds that "one should not rely on a single year of JCR data for journal assessment purposes" (Nisonger 1995); hence, this study looks at two years over a ten year period. Furthermore, I have noted inconsistencies in what ISI counts as an article. I propose my operational definition above as a vast improvement upon theirs. 3) Ranking of Journals as Read by Practitioners. In 1981, Ali reported on the reading or scanning habits of 50 practitioners-see his table 1 on page 169 (Ali 1986). This present study

will use his data and correlate it with other factors such as circulation. B) Circulation (subscription figures can be used as a proxy for reading) 1) Circulation/subscription figures reported to Ulrich's for 1998 (if not present, then email to editors and, if no response, Lynn W. Livingston, In Print: Publishing Opportunities for College Librarians, Chicago: ALA, 1997 or Carol F. Schroeder and Gloria G. Roberson, ed., Guide to Publishing Opportunities for Librarians, New York: Haworth Press, 1995).

Methodology

This section addresses the total population, sampling procedures, data screening and analysis, and selection of appropriate statistical tests.

Population and Sample

All LIS journals (where N=5,228), based on Ulrich's listings under a browse index for subject searching the phrase "library and information sciences" in Ulrich's OnDisc Windows 1.14 (1998). Using purposive sampling because the intent is not to generalize to all LIS journals, but to examine the following two segments of the population: (1) leading LIS Journals (N=10)-need to be larger for statistical analysis--and (2) international LIS Journals (N=19)-based on operational definition above.

Data Screening and Analysis

The goal of data coding in this study is to convert the operational definitions from the theoretical structure/logical framework stated above into a machine-readable form for computer supported statistical analysis and testing of the hypothesis. This task was undertaken by personally examining first-hand all of the journals in this study. I performed all analyses in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 8.0. Basic statistical tests, such as a T-test, will be used to determine whether the two groups (leading or international) are similar or not. In addition, it is possible to use the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r), is to expose and describe the association of two or more ratio level variables within and between groups. Following Guilford (Fundamental Statistics in Psychology and Education, p. 145), the following qualitative terms may be used in interpreting correlations: where slight equals < .20; low ranges from .20 to .40; moderate meaning anything in the .40 to .70 range; high equals .70 to .90; and very high is anything > .90. For the purposes of statistical analysis, only significant findings at the .01 level of significance will be reported due to the small sample sizes of the two groups.

Provisional Findings

At the outset, I must state a couple of qualifications. First, many variables related to these journals are going to be auto-correlated given the artifactual structures present. Furthermore, these findings are tentative because the data set for leading group is missing 23 out of 160 data points (14%) while the international grouping is missing about 131 out of 304 (43%). Nonetheless, I can confidently state some preliminary findings.

Leading Journals

As a group, the average age of these journals is forty-two years old, twice that of the international journals; the oldest journal is the Bulletin of the Medical Library Association founded in 1911. Hence, eminence seems to have something to do with age of the journal. The average circulation is 2200 copies per issue, twice that of the

international journals. The typical acceptance rate of a double blind peer-reviewed article is 35% and involves two-and-a-half male editors assisted by a twenty-two member editorial board, more than three of whom are women and four are international. The more editors, the more likely women are to be involved and the same can be said for the size of the editorial board. The typical leading journal publishes more than thirty articles per year of which seven are written by international authors. The average ISI impact factor for these top ten journals is about 1.35.

International Journals

These journals are nineteen years old, less than half that of the leading journals. Appropriately enough, the first journal to use the word "international" in its subtitle was Libri, the "International Library Review" of IFLA in 1950. Apparently, the profession's awareness of global aspects of its activities dates to the 1980s. The average circulation figure is 1,000 copies per issue compared to twice that of the leading journals. The typical acceptance rate is about 50% and involves two editors, one of whom is a woman (in contrast to the leading journals) and one of whom is an international editor. This journal has a fifteen member editorial board, composed of thirteen international members and three of the board members are women. The journal publishes about fifteen articles per year, more than five of which are from international authors. The average ISI ranking is twenty-four and an impact factor, on average, of .31.

Research Questions

Here, I wish to exercise more caution in talking about the findings because of those missing data points. In other words, these findings are subject to change. Nonetheless, it appears that research question one: How international are the "international" journals compared to the leading LIS journals?" can be answered. As mentioned above, the international journals publish fifteen articles a year as opposed to thirty for the leading journals. A third of the articles are international for the "international" journals whereas only 23% are from international authors in the leading journals. So, I conclude that international journals are truly more international than the leading LIS journals, by intent. "Does an international editorial board increase the number of international articles, perceptual rankings, impact, or circulation?" Among the leading LIS journals, there is a strong correlation between size of editorial board and the number of international board members but does not seem to aid in attracting articles from international authors. For international LIS journals, it seems that while a larger board is likely to have more international members it seems that publishing more articles is as important as having a larger circulation in terms of attracting international authors to submit publishable manuscripts. Otherwise there is, however, no statistical significant relationship at the .001 level between rankings or impact factors for either the leading or international LIS journal and the above mentioned variables, otherwise. Are LIS journals published outside of the United States more international than those published in the United States? (In other words, is there a North American paradigm?) By grouping the journals into four clusters: North America, United Kingdom, Europe, and elsewhere, it is possible to suggest a couple of answers. By way of background, six (or 60%) of the ten leading LIS journals are publish in the United States, three (30%) in the United Kingdom, and one (10%) in Europe. The nineteen internationally oriented LIS journals are more equally distributed globally: six are published in the United States, six in the United Kingdom, four in Europe and two elsewhere. Of the total number of international authors, articles are most likely to appear in a leading journal that is published in the United Kingdom and least likely to appear in an international journal that is published in the United States. Specifically, international authors are twice more likely to appear in leading

LIS journals published in the United Kingdom rather than in leading United States published journals. International authors appearing in international journals are also four times more likely to be published in United Kingdom LIS journals than in United States journals. So, United States LIS journals appear to have been less internationally oriented in 1998. Another answer is that journals published outside the United States are more likely to have international editorial boards; so, yes, LIS journals published outside are more international in orientation.

Conclusions

There are significant differences between leading and international journals in library and information science. The former group is older and has lower acceptance rates; the latter are smaller and have higher acceptance rates. There are a number of significant relationships between editors and gender, editorial size and number of international editorial board members. International submissions are most influenced by international board members on international journals. United States journals are not as international as United Kingdom, Europe or journals published elsewhere in the world.

Future Research

Regrettably, no current study of the perceptual ranking of journals is available at this time; should this information become available, it would be worthwhile including those data points in the analysis. Observant readers will note that an article could focus on an international topic, regardless of whether or not its author's ethnicity is international. Hence, future research studies could analyze whether or not articles are defined by author nationality, by the content itself, or both.

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Table 1. International Journals in Library and Information Science

Document World: The International Publication
Focus on International and Comparative Librarianship
Government Information Quarterly: An International Journal
Information Development: The International Journal for Librarians
Information Processing & Management: An International Journal
International Information and Library Review (formerly ILR)
International Information, Communication and Education
International Journal of Information Management
International Journal of Legal Information
International Journal of Micrographics & Optical Technology
International Journal on Digital Libraries
JISSI: International Journal of Scientometrics and Informetrics
Journal of Government Information: An International Review
Journal of Internet Cataloging: The International Quarterly
Knowledge Organization: An International Journal
Library & Information Science Research: An International Journal
Libri: International Library Review
Microcomputers for Information Management: An International Journal
Restaurator: International Journal for the Preservation of Library
Serials Librarian: The International Scholarly Journal of Serials Management

SOURCE: Ulrich's International Periodical Directory, 1998

Table 2. Leading Journals in Library and Information Science

Bulletin of the Medical Library Association
College and Research Libraries
International Journal of Geographical Information Science
Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association
Journal of American Society for Information Society
Journal of Documentation
Library Quarterly
MIS Quarterly
Scientometrics
Telecommunications Policy

SOURCE: Institute for Scientific Information, JCR (1998).

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For example, ARIST would not be considered a periodical because it is published on an annual basis nor would Archivum because it is published every four years.

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